

## STATEMENT OF U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY ON HOUSING CUTS

We are here today ready to do what it takes to expose the truth, halt the attack, and turn the tide on a clear pattern that is emerging from the majority party in Congress this year.□

The truth is that business, special interests, and the wealthy get the big breaks in an \$800 billion tax bill and the rest of America gets to pay for it.□ Oil and steel company interests are well preserved in emergency spending bills, while the real problems that face most Americans are neglected.□ Plans to extend the solvency of Medicare and Social Security, pay down the national debt, and provide targeted tax cuts to those who really need it take a back seat in favor of hundreds of billions of dollars in corporate welfare giveaways.□

The latest attack is in the form of a drastic cut in our nation's housing budget.□ The House Appropriations Committee passed a housing budget that is more than \$2 billion below the President's request.□ As a result, up to 212,500 people will not receive assistance or have access to affordable housing. Seniors, low-income families, persons with disabilities and the homeless are the latest victims of this pattern of fiscal irresponsibility.

The Appropriations Committee failed to fully fund Section 8 housing.□ As a result, 100,000 families and seniors in need will not have access to affordable housing. The Community Development Block Grant program, a successful initiative that is widely supported by mayors throughout the nation, is cut by \$250 million and is \$25 million below the President's request.□ As a result, 33,000 people will not get homebuyer assistance and will not have the opportunity to build or buy a home.□

Homeless assistance is cut by \$5 million and is \$50 million below the President's request.□ This would result in 43,000 homeless people, including 15,000 homeless children, not receiving much needed services.□ Also, thirty thousand more people, including 6,500 homeless veterans and 12,000 persons with disabilities, would lose access to emergency shelter beds.□ In addition, housing opportunities for persons with HIV/AIDS is cut by \$20 million and is \$25 million below the President's request, leaving 6,500 people without any housing assistance.

The news gets worse.□ The Republican leadership reneged on its promise to reinstate \$350 million in Section 8 housing program funds to Fiscal Year 2000 HUD appropriations.□ As a result, 60,000 seniors and low-income families could lose their homes if the funds are not reinstated.

We have seen this pattern before and we are seeing it again.□ The interests of those who cannot hire highly paid Capitol Hill lobbyists are often ignored, disregarded, or simply pushed aside.□ At a time of unprecedented economic prosperity, we have an opportunity

**in Congress to meet our national priorities and help those who are left behind. Failing to do so is a morally bankrupt public policy.**

**We are here today to put an end to this and to turn the tide. The needs of hard-working families and seniors living on Main Street are more important than the CEOs working on Wall Street. We must take drastic steps to develop a successful and comprehensive affordable housing and economic development policy. It is a national priority.**

**It is time for us to organize and lead the way. With a collective voice, we can get it done.**